



Bill No: SB292
Title: Criminal Law - Victims of Child Sex Trafficking and Human Trafficking - Safe Harbor and Service Response
Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Hearing: February 14, 2023
Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. **SB292 - Criminal Law - Victims of Child Sex Trafficking and Human Trafficking - Safe Harbor and Service Response** is a priority on the [2023 MLAW Agenda](#) and we urge your support.

SB292 will provide a safe harbor for child victims of sex trafficking and prevent their further victimization by connecting them to rehabilitative and supportive services through the already established Regional Navigator program, while providing a pathway to prevent any criminal or delinquent charges brought against them that are directly related to their trafficking.

The majority of sex trafficking victims are women and girls. Currently in Maryland, children can be charged in the adult criminal or juvenile justice system for acts that are directly linked to their victimization, including prostitution and other related offenses.

This bill would provide a safe harbor for child victims of sex trafficking and prevent prosecution for acts committed as a result of their trafficking including prostitution and other related offenses. Legislation was passed in 2019 establishing the Regional Navigator program that connects child survivors of trafficking to necessary services. This bill will benefit women and girls by preventing them from being criminalized for acts they committed as a result of their trafficking victimization, and will support their healing rather than their continued punishment.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of SB292.

MLAW 2023 Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of our 2023 Legislative Agenda*:

AAUW Anne Arundel County
AAUW Howard County
AAUW Maryland
Advocacy and Training Center
Allegany County Women's Action Coalition
Anne Arundel County NOW
Aspire Ascend
Baltimore County State Democratic Central Committee
Bound for Better
Business and Professional Women of Maryland
Charles County Commission for Women
Climate Xchange Maryland
Drake Institute of Women's Policy
Empowered Women in Business International
ERA Coalition
For All Seasons, Inc.
Kensington-Rockville AAUW
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA)
Maryland Commission for Women
Maryland NOW
Maryland WISE Women
Miller Partnership Consultants LLC
MoCoWoMen
Montgomery County Business & Professional Women (MC BPW)
Montgomery County Chapter, National Organization for Women
Montgomery County Commission for Women
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Prince George's County Chapter
National Women of Achievement, Inc.
Planned Parenthood of Maryland
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC
Reproductive Justice Inside
Southern Prince George's Business and Professional Women
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., Prince George's County Chapter
University of Baltimore School of Law If/When/How Chapter
Women's Democratic League of Frederick County
Women's Equity Center and Action Network (WE CAN)
Women's Law Center of Maryland
Zonta Club of Annapolis
Zonta Club of Mid-Maryland

**as of 2/3/2023*

Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

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